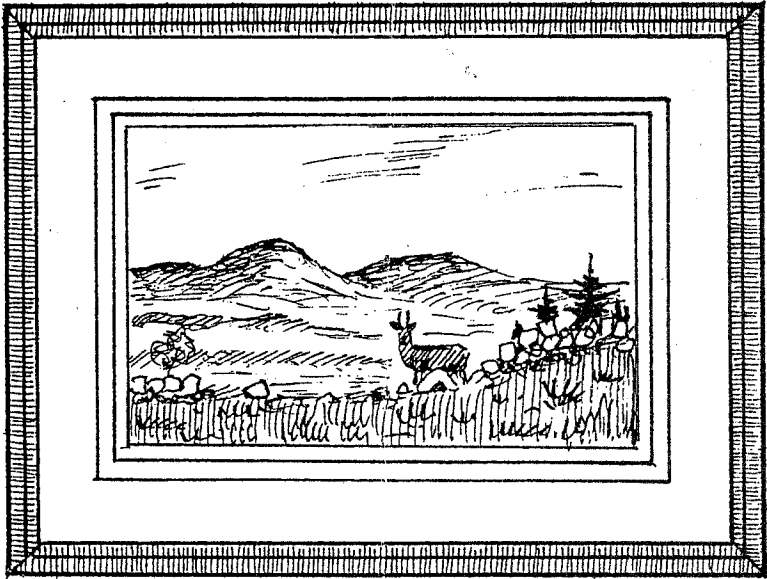




CARSPHAIRN
HERITAGE
GROUP



NEWSLETTER - No. 9
JANUARY 1990

A.G.M.

This was held at Lagwyne Hall on 17.11.89 as planned. Lt. Col. J. Clark Kennedy gave a report on the group's Heritage Trail activities and Miss Jane Page, the Regional Archaeologist, gave an interesting talk and slide show on the ancient remains of the area.

DANCE

The Old Time Dance held at Lagwyne Hall on December 1st was a success and it has been agreed to hold another dance, again with Roger Dobson's band, on 23.11.90.

About 70 people attended the event and the group made a profit of £181.48.

SPONSORED WALK

Sponsorship returns on the Rhinns of Kells walk of 30th September now exceed £600.

NEW AFFORESTATION

Contacts with the owners have confirmed that Moorbrock and Strahanna farms are likely to be sold for afforestation this spring. Members may be aware that our area is now one of the few in Britain where new afforestation is not preceded by any form of consultation with the local community and it may be that the Heritage Group will need to be active in trying to ensure that areas containing ancient

remains and other features of special interest are left unplanted. The two adjoining farms are ideal for a winter's walk and it is hoped that as many members as possible will visit this scenic area and report to committee members on their findings. Apart from Moorbrock Hill and Keogh Rig most of the area provides easy walking, especially the lengthy Glenhead Rig where ancient remains are known to be located.

RAFFLE

The front of this newsletter features a sketch of a painting by Hans Bulder.

Hans Bulder is an entirely self-taught artist who started his working life as a Dental Technician. Born at Scheveningen, Holland in 1953 he moved at a young age to Veluwe, the largest uninterrupted nature reserve in the Netherlands. He wandered in this natural environment for many years before starting to paint in the '70s. His paintings are inspired by the seasons, the weather, animals and plants and he has been described as a thoughtful realist.

Exhibitions of Hans Bulder's work have been presented throughout Holland and in Hanover, Frankfurt, London and Dumfries. The artist's great enthusiasm for wildlife and obvious natural talent as a painter have established his name in wildlife art circles. His work hangs in prestigious private collections all over Europe, in the U.S.A., Australia and the U.K.

His particular love for Galloway and its wild life has caused South West Scotland to become almost his second home. It was on his visit this summer that he

CARSPHAIRN HERITAGE GROUP

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 1.11.88 TO 31.10.89

Exhibition	277.00
Treatise	63.00
Teddy Bear's Picnic	55.96
Cookbooks	132.00
Membership	207.00
Cheese & Wine	386.39
Sundries	54.08
Grants-Trail leaflets	408.00
Sponsored Walk	360.10
Donations	25.80
Interest	40.90

2010.23

Bal. B/F	Cash	17.33
	Current a/c	207.93
	Investment a/c	284.80
	Deposit Bond	109.88

£2630.17

Exhibition	126.16
Treatise	58.29
Teddy Bear's Picnic	11.60
Cookbooks	92.52
Cheese & Wine	186.52
Sundries	93.37
Trail leaflets	340.52
Sponsored Walk	8.46
A.G.M. '88	33.54
Secretary's expenses	25.70

976.68

C/F	Cash	20.10
	Current a/c	81.97
	Investment a/c	1128.48
	Deposit Bond	122.20
	Ordinary a/c	300.74

£2630.17

- 0 - 0 - 0 - 0 - 0 - 0 - 0 - 0 - 0 -

learnt, from his hosts Mr. and Mrs. I. Watret, Muirdochwood, of Carsphairn Heritage Group and our efforts to establish a Heritage Centre. He immediately and generously donated one of his paintings to our fund raising efforts. We are very appreciative of this magnificent gesture and the painting will be raffled. Tickets will be available through Committee Members and the winning ticket will be drawn at our Wine and Cheese Party on 26.5.90.

Our thanks are also due to Mr. Steve Course, Ottersburn Gallery, Dumfries, who kindly framed the picture free of charge.

Footnote

You may be interested to know that this painting has been valued at approximately £350 to £400 and many of Mr. Bulder's paintings are presently selling in excess of £3,000.

INVITATION

As Carsphairn is celebrating the 350th anniversary of the parish this year the Woman's Guild has invited Mrs. Dahne Brooke of Auchencairn to talk about "Carsphairn before 1640". Over the last few years Mrs. Brooke has held evening classes in Dalry on various aspects of local history and she is regarded as an expert on the history of the Glenkens before 1500. In 1984 she had a pamphlet entitled "The Glenkens 1275 - 1456 published by the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society. The Guild has decided to make this an 'Open' evening and all those interested are invited to come to hear Mrs. Brooke on February 8th at 7.30p.m. in Lagwyne Hall.

GIFTS

Gifts have been made by Mrs. Richmond, Glenhoul, Dalry and Mr. Gordon, Woodhead, Carsphairn. Mrs. Richmond has passed on lots of old pairs of spectacles, some of which are very old and some old razors. Mr. Gordon has given the group two objects, one of which is still a mystery. It is thought to be part of the head of a cultivator. The other, which at first glance looks like a long nail, is a handheld star drill which was used for preparing holes in rock for blasting. A man would hold it against the rock, then hammer it, and turn it a quarter turn, then hammer again and so on. The star (the hard bit in the middle of the drill) shattered the rock and turning it made the hole round. When the job was completed the "black powder"

was put in the holes and ignited and the rock was blasted. The star drill was a lead miners' tool and the first tool from the lead mines to be given to the group.

HERITAGE TRAIL NEWS

Indications are that in their first few months of opening the trails have already attracted quite a number of people. Hundreds of trail maps were taken from the dispensers and the visitor books had over 100 entries, with positive comments on the walks.

Both the Trail Maps and the general Trails leaflet will be reprinted later this year. If anyone feels changes are needed in any of them please get in touch as soon as possible with Susan Clempert, Smittons, Dalry, Castle Douglas who is our secretary.

CARSPHAIRN SHEPHERD'S DANCE

Before the next newsletter is published the annual Herd's Dance will have been in Carsphairn. Below is an account of one, held, we think in the early 1930's. Can anyone pinpoint it more accurately and tell us before the next newsletter? For those reading this and perhaps not knowing anybody mentioned in the report there are some interesting points from it. There were three people from the leadmines which showed that a few houses were occupied there. From the records available it can be seen that self-employed people such as drainers lived at the mines because they often found it difficult to get housing in more accessible places. The farmhouses of Glenlee

and Moor up the Deuch valley no longer exist as both farms are afforested. Where is the Deuch schoolhouse? Is this the same as the school at Meadowhead that existed until about 1913? Once up the Deuch valley there were nine households - now there are two. The population of this glen has dwindled to a very small number because of the massive acreage of land that has gone to trees here. At the southern end of the parish there is a similar picture with many of the farms being sold to the Forestry Commission in the early years of its development in this area. The Shiel is covered in trees and the house is used by a voluntary group for outdoor pursuits. In 1990 it is unlikely that 200 will come to a herd's dance in Carsphairn. Other entertainments and a change in lifestyle have come but one glaring point stands out in this account - how rapid the depopulation of a rural area such as Carsphairn has become in the last 60 years.

A Record Attendance

The shepherds of Carsphairn district held their annual dance in the Lagwyne Hall on Friday evening. The attendance was much above the usual for Carsphairn, nearly 200 being present, many having come from as far as Barr, Straiton, Hollybush and New Cumnock. The arrangements were carried through in a most satisfactory manner by the following committee:

Mr. John Fergusson, Woodhead (president); Messrs. Robert Wilson, Erriff; John McCutcheon, Meadowhead; James Dickson, Gass; David Fergusson, Woodhead; Robert Wilson, Monquhall; with Mr. S.A. McKay, Lamford, secretary and treasurer.

The catering arrangements were in charge of the following ladies, who performed their task in a most satisfactory manner:-

Mrs. Fergusson, Woodhead; Mrs. and Miss McCutcheon, Meadowhead; Mrs. Grierson, Drumjohn; Miss Grace Walker, Monquhill. Excellent music was supplied by Mr. Boyd's band from Dalmellington. Mr. S.A. McKay and Mr. Wilson performing the duties of m.c.'s. The following were amongst the acceptances, the address being Carsphairn where not otherwise stated: Miss McLaren; Mr. Wm. Dickson; Miss Jessie King; Mr. and Mrs. D.W. Blythe; Miss M. Hyslop; Mr. and Mrs. G. Hunter; Miss K. Sykes; Miss J. Hunter; Mr. H. and Miss B. Martin; Messrs. A. and J. Hunter; Mr. and Mrs. C.E. Stewart; Mr. Ian Stewart; Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Stewart; Misses I. and E. Stewart; Miss Eliz. Stewart; Mr. and Mrs. Devlin, Lamloch; Messrs. Thompson, The Mines; Mr. J. Carnochan, The Lodge; Mr. R. Drile, Darnaw; Mr. J. Belford, Shiel; Mr. D. McTaggart, Mossdale, Dalmellington; Mr. D. McCleary, Auchenroy, Dalmellington; Misses Dickson, Camlarg, Dalmellington; Mrs. W. Templeton and Mr. C. McTaggart, Shields, Dalmellington; Miss J. McKay, Beoch, Loch Doon; Messrs. R. and J. Bell, Smeaton; Misses Shields, Auchenroy, Dalmellington; Miss E. Swan, Darlae, Barr; Mr. and Mrs. Meikle, Moniaive; Mr. R. and Miss M. Campbell, Craigmulloch Lodge, Loch Doon; Mr. F. I. Meikle, Craigdarroch, Moniaive; Mr. and Mrs. McMorran, Marscalloch; Mr. T. Armstrong, Beoch, Loch Doon; Mr. R. Armstrong, Lochhead, Loch Doon; Miss M. Napier, Dalmellington;

cont. on P.5

Mr. S. McGarva, Fingland, Dalry; Miss A. McFadzean, Burnhead, Dalry; Miss S.R. McKnight, Knockgray; Mr. A. Bell, Knockreoch, Dalry; Mr. A. and Miss McMorran, Woodhead; Misses Hutchison and Miss Carmichael and Mr. T. Millar, Newarkhill, Ayr; Mr. S. Fergusson, Linfairn, Straiton; Mr. and Mrs. A. Murdoch, Castle Croft, Dalmellington; Mr. D. Pringle, Loch Doon; Mr. and Mrs. Pringle, Boat House, Dunaskin; Mr. W. Millar, Dalmellington; Mr. J. Armstrong, Knockdon, Straiton; Mr. and the Misses McGarva, Arndarroch; Messrs. R. and J. Murray, Forrest, Dalry; Mr. T. Fergusson, Carminnows; Mr. and Mrs. A. Fergusson and Mr. A. McNae, Strongcastle, Dalry; Mr. and Mrs. James Murdoch, Gatefauldhead, Dalmellington, Mr. and Mrs. J. Sykes, Glenlee; Mr. and Mrs. A. Gillespie, The Moor; Mr. J. Thorburn, The Moor; Miss A. Hutchison, Deuch Schoolhouse; Mrs. J. Martin, The Mines; Mr. and Miss Templeton, Moorbrock; Mr. Wm. Hutchison jr., Muirdrochwood; Messrs. Hastings, Bridgemark; Mr. R. McTaggart and Miss E. Johnstone, Dalcairn-ey, Dalmellington; Mr. Wm. Fergusson, Knockengarroch; Miss McCallie, Lead Mines; Mrs. Hutchison, Muirdrochwood.

'SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY' T.V. SERIES

Several years ago Jimmie MacGregor made a radio series on the Southern Upland Way. In it he mentioned nothing about the Carsphairn area, so when last April he told radio listeners that he would be doing a T.V. series on the same route, I sent him our Heritage Trails leaflet in the hope that he would find something worth stopping for.

A couple of weeks later I had a visit from the husband and wife team who make the series. Although they had already researched most of the route, and decided basically the structure of each programme, they needed more material for the Dalry to Sanquhar stretch. I did my best to 'sell' them our local attractions but they were more interested in getting me to speak personally to Jimmie up at Allan's Cairn.

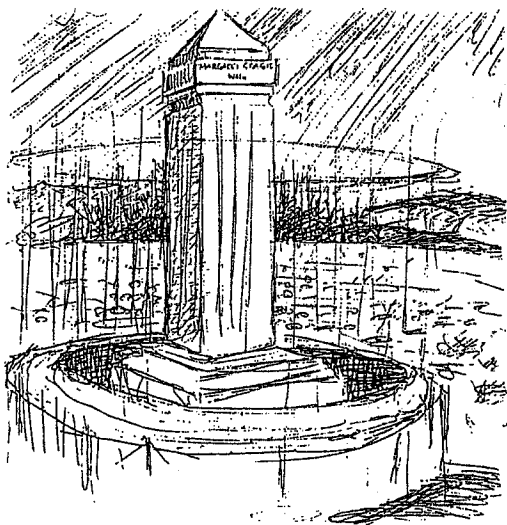
I met the team on the morning of June 6th at the Milton Park Hotel where they were staying, and drove up to the Cairn. This meant driving some 40 miles via Penpont and up the Scaur glen to reach a point which is only 3 miles N.W. of the Holm of Dalquhairn and even closer to the Lorg. It seems that nobody does much actual walking in programmes like this. Stopping at the nearest point on the forest track to the Cairn, we did the final 100 yards on foot - cameraman, soundman, driver, the above-mentioned couple, Jimmie and I. At the Cairn itself a local person was waiting - Colin Watret, who is responsible for this forest area and who had spent two days cleaning up the Cairn for its big day on the T.V. The last time I saw this impressive sandstone monument it had been dull grey - now it was a fine glowing pink.

Most of the filming done at the Cairn actually appeared on the programme, unlike that from other spots nearby. I think all of my conversation with Jimmie was shown. On the walk down towards the bothy, however, we had to walk several times down the same wind-break, discussing the same incident about a blackbird, until the director felt he had enough shots from different

angles. Although he didn't walk much of the Southern Upland Way, Jimmie must have covered a fair few miles parading up and down in front of the camera. His enthusiasm for the hills and the wildlife is certainly genuine and down at Polskeoch bothy he was quick to discover a thrush's nest in the woodpile.

The Allan's Cairn sequence represented a day's work; each programme in the series took a week to film.

ROBIN ADE.



Allan's Cairn was set up for two martyrs; part of the inscription reads:-

"Watch till the trumpet peal aloud,
Watch till the judge appear with the
cloud,
Then guide your charge to the gathering
throng,
When the judgement is set to avenge
their wrong."

A.D. 1857

CARSPHAIRN SHOW - 100th ANNIVERSARY

Carsphairn Pastoral and Horticultural Society was established in 1875. The centenary of the Society was in 1975 and was celebrated by a dinner in the Salutation Hotel for the committee and their spouses and two guest speakers. (Cost of dinner without fish course, quoted at approx. £1.50 per head.)

1990's show will be the hundredth show, there was no show during war years. The first show was held on 2nd June, 1876 (this year's event will also be held on the 2nd of June - pure coincidence). Extract from the first minute of the show - headed "Carsphairn February 5th 1876; At a meeting convened in the schoolroom here for the purpose of making arrangements for a show of poultry, dogs and flowers, etc...."

It is interesting to note that at this time there were no classes for sheep. Carsphairn Show is now widely recognised as one of the best, if not the best, show of the 'Newton Stewart' type, of Blackface sheep, in the world. Sheep classes were introduced in 1880; extract from minute of March 2nd, 1880 - "It was agreed at the meeting to write to all the farmers in the district to see if they approved of entering(sic) sheep into the show list".

In 1880 there were five exhibitors in the Sheep section with a total entry of 24 sheep in four classes. In 1989 there were 38 sheep exhibitors with a total entry of 178 sheep in twenty-three classes.

As well as being one of the top shows for Blackface sheep, Carsphairn has an Industrial section of an equally high

7. standard displaying the first examples of baking, knitting, sewing, etc.

PETER HUNTER-BLAIR.

A-FRAME PROJECT

Since our last Newsletter, some considerable progress has been made. Anne Rutherford and myself have met with representatives of the District Council, Countryside Commission, S.D.A. and Regional Council Physical Planning Dept.

Following on from this, our project has been discussed at meetings of the Stewartry District Council Environmental Health and Leisure Services Committee and finally a full meeting of the Stewartry District Council. This latter meeting took place on 28th December 1989 and the following is an extract from the minutes of that meeting.

"With the support and agreement of the Carsphairn Heritage Trust, the District Council take over the control and administration of this project.

This entails the following:-

(a) Acquisition of the site for the project by the District Council on terms agreed by the District Valuer.

(b) The Director of Technical Services follows through on the initial plans prepared by the private architect and takes the project through to completion with due consultation with all the parties concerned, i.e. Countryside Commission, Scottish Development Agency, Dumfries & Galloway Regional Council (Planning), District Council (Environmental Health and Leisure Services) and Carsphairn Heritage Trust.

(c) The Director of Finance arrange the financing and accounting for the project in liaison with the other funding agencies to the best advantage to the District Council.

A report on the costs and funding of the project (i.e. capital expenditure) will be submitted to the Council in due course having regard to S94 Consent limits and to the fact that this project is not included in the current capital plan for General Services.

(d) On completion of the project, the District Council will be responsible for the maintenance of all the buildings and for the servicing of the public conveniences on a similar basis to other public conveniences in the District.

(e) The Heritage Centre will be leased to the Trust on a long lease for a nominal sum on the basis that that organisation will administer and operate the Centre from its own resources. It may of course apply to the District Council for grant assistance in terms of the Council's Leisure and Recreation annual scheme of grants, when available."

Since then we have also received planning permission for the project incorporating Public Toilets. This is the plan which has been on view at our meetings.

At the moment preliminary work on commencing this project is being undertaken by the District Council, and I hope to have more to report in our next Newsletter.